1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
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584 will be said that a man would not lightly or without reason change his mind on so serious a matter if he had not discovered some grave moral or physical deficiency in the girl. No man of worth is likely to choose a girl whom another has previously rejected. She can only hope to marry a widower or a poor man [627] from a despised family. Therefore to break an engagement is a violent affront to the honour of all the members of the bride's family, and as such it carries the ultimate sanction of vengeance killing, which the girl's brothers, if they are men of honour, ought to carry through against the person of the bridegroom. It follows that both for the sake of his honour and prestige in the community, and for very life itself, a man is unlikely to break a betrothal contract. On the other hand, a bridegroom, if he finds out between the betrothal and the marriage (a period of between three months to a year) that he is being tricked into marriage with a particularly ugly or unhealthy girl, may consider himself released from his pledge of honour. [164] It is generally in connexion with incurable diseases such as advanced pulmonary tuberculosis that betrothals are sometimes broken off. It cannot, however, be said that the danger of a broken betrothal deters the girl's family from every kind of trickery or concealment when there is the possibility of marrying off an ugly or unhealthy daughter or sister. The disgrace of a girl remaining unmarried is feared more than the bridegroom's reluctance and its possible consequences.

584 178 It is mainly to avoid these risks and difficulties that, today, a bridegroom often will not allow the formal approach to be made to a girl's family until he, or a trusted brother, has had an opportunity of secretly appraising the appearance and bearing of a prospective bride. For the same reasons, families with daughters of marriageable age try to display the more attractive girls and prevent their ugly or sick sisters from being seen at wells or in other public places. When a man wants to view a possible bride, he generally goes to stay at a kinsman's home near to the huts of the girl's family. From the women of his kinsman's family he learns of the girl's daily movements and arranges to be near the well or stream when she goes to draw water or wash clothes. He may watch her secretly from behind cover or may saunter casually past and say 'Good day', to which she will not reply. These antics are unnecessary if the man has